

Text Completion and Sentence Equivalence Sections: Memorize Vocabulary

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Memorizing Vocabulary

Introduction:

You need to memorize vocabulary because it is the most effective way to significantly increase your score on the verbal section. This means the more vocabulary words you know, the higher you will score on the verbal section.

What to do:

You must know the spelling, pronunciation, part of speech, and definition(s), **and** you must use the words in examples. Use flashcards (physical or electronic) in addition to the words in a test prep book. Please make every effort to secure some, or at least a word list that includes the pronunciations, parts of speech, definitions, and some examples of each word.

Consider how much time you have to prepare and memorize at least 500 words before the actual test. If you have one month before the test, you will need to memorize 125 words each week. You must know all aspects of the word 100% before you discard it from your list of words to memorize. If you are 99.9% sure of a word, keep it in your list or pile of flashcards until you are 100% confident you know the word.

More tips:

1. Look for and take vocabulary tests online.
2. As you read for classes, increase your vocabulary by listing words you don't know in the empty pages at the front of the books you read. Note the page number so you can refer to the word in its context.
3. Read material and content read by a more highly educated audience. Here are some suggestions:
 - Check out *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Economist*, and npr.org to start.
 - Ask a humanities professor about a 'great books' list that includes literature, philosophy, and history and read those books that interest you.
 - Read books and other publications by Nobel laureates.

Conclusion:

Memorizing vocabulary (by using flashcards and while reading) **and** taking practice tests is the key to significantly increasing your verbal section score. What you need is time, but also factor in your energy level when you study. Many students set aside time to memorize vocabulary and practice test questions, but with busy lifestyles and schedules, many forget to consider whether or not they have the energy to concentrate and make their study time effective.

Having a strong vocabulary will not only help you score higher on the GRE, it will also help you in graduate school. With a stronger vocabulary, you will read with more understanding, and your writing will be clearer and more accurate as well as less wordy.